

Rationale

Anaphylaxis is a severe, rapidly progressive allergic reaction that is potentially life threatening. The key to prevention of anaphylaxis in schools is knowledge of those students who have been diagnosed at risk, awareness of triggers (allergens), and prevention of exposure to these triggers. Partnerships between schools and parents are important in ensuring that certain foods or items are kept away from the student while at school.

Definitions

Anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is a severe, rapidly progressive allergic reaction that is potentially life threatening. Symptoms of anaphylaxis include swelling of the face and eyes, difficulty breathing, abdominal pain and/or vomiting and loss of consciousness or can affect the cardio-vascular system.

The most common allergens in school-aged children are peanuts, eggs, tree nuts (e.g. cashews), dairy products, fish and shellfish, wheat, soy, sesame, latex, certain insect stings and medication.

Adrenaline

Adrenaline is the medication given through an EpiPen® autoinjector to the muscle of the outer mid thigh and is the most effective first aid treatment for anaphylaxis.

Goals

- To provide, as far as practicable, a safe and supportive environment in which students at risk of anaphylaxis can participate equally in all aspects of the student's schooling.
- To raise awareness about anaphylaxis and the school's anaphylaxis management policy in the school community
- To engage with parents/carers of students at risk of anaphylaxis in assessing risks, developing risk minimisation strategies and management strategies for the student.
- To ensure that each staff member has adequate knowledge about allergies, anaphylaxis and the school's policy and procedures in responding to an anaphylactic reaction.

Strategies

INDIVIDUAL ANAPHYLAXIS MANGEMENT PLANS

The Head Teacher will ensure that an individual management plan is developed, in consultation with the student's parents and doctor, for any student who has been diagnosed by a medical practitioner as being at risk of anaphylaxis.

Note: A template of an individual anaphylaxis management plan can be found on Page 18 Anaphylaxis Guidelines for Victorian Government Schools or the Department's website: <http://www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/wellbeing/support/anaphyl.htm> These guidelines are an attachment to this policy

The individual anaphylaxis management plan will be in place as soon as practicable after the student enrolls, and where possible before their first day of school.

The individual anaphylaxis management plan will set out the following:

- Information about the diagnosis, including the type of allergy or allergies the student has (based on a diagnosis from a medical practitioner).
- Strategies to minimise the risk of exposure to allergens while the student is under the care or supervision of school staff, for in-school and out of school settings including camps and excursions

Note: Appendix 2 (pp 21 – 23) of the Anaphylaxis Guidelines for Victorian Government Schools contains advice about a range of prevention strategies that can be put in place to discuss with parents.

- The name of the person/s responsible for implementing the strategies.
- Information on where the student's medication will be stored.
- The student's emergency contact details.
- An emergency procedures plan (ASCIA Action Plan), provided by the parent, that:
 - sets out the emergency procedures to be taken in the event of an allergic reaction;
 - is signed by a medical practitioner who was treating the child on the date the practitioner signs the emergency procedures plan; and
 - includes an up to date photograph of the student.

Note: The red and blue 'ASCIA Action Plan' is the most common form of emergency procedures plan that is provided by medical practitioners to parents when a child is diagnosed as being at risk of anaphylaxis. An example can be found on page 20 of the Anaphylaxis Guidelines or downloaded from <http://www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/wellbeing/support/anaphyl.htm>

The student's individual management plan will be reviewed, in consultation with the student's parents/carers:

- annually, and as applicable,
- if the student's condition changes, or
- immediately after a student has an anaphylactic reaction at school.

It is the responsibility of the parent to:

- provide the emergency procedures plan (ASCIA Action Plan).
- inform the school if their child's medical condition changes, and if relevant provide an updated emergency procedures plan (ASCIA Action Plan).
- provide an up to date photo for the emergency procedures plan (ASCIA Action Plan) when the plan is provided to the school and when it is reviewed.

COMMUNICATION PLAN

Note: Page 15 of the Anaphylaxis Guidelines for Victorian Government

Schools has advice about strategies to raise staff and student awareness, working with parents/carers and engaging the broader school community

The Head Teacher will be responsible for ensuring that a communication plan is developed to provide information to all staff, students and parents about anaphylaxis and the school's anaphylaxis management policy.

The communication plan will include information about what steps will be taken to respond to an anaphylactic reaction by a student in a classroom, in the school yard, on school excursions, on school camps and special event days.

Volunteers and casual relief staff will be informed by the Head Teacher of students at risk of anaphylaxis and their role in responding to an anaphylactic reaction by a student in their care.

All staff will be briefed once each semester by a staff member who has up to date anaphylaxis management training on:

- the school's anaphylaxis management policy
- the causes, symptoms and treatment of anaphylaxis
- the identities of students diagnosed at risk of anaphylaxis and where their medication is located
- how to use an autoadrenaline injecting device
- the school's first aid and emergency response procedures

Note: A DVD is available that can be used for this purpose at staff briefings.

STAFF TRAINING AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Teachers and other school staff who conduct classes which students at risk of anaphylaxis attend, or give instruction to students at risk of anaphylaxis must have up to date training in an anaphylaxis management training course.

At other times while the student is under the care or supervision of the school, including excursions, yard duty, camps and special event days, the Head Teacher must ensure that there is a sufficient number of staff present who have up to date training in an anaphylaxis management training course.

The Head Teacher will identify the school staff to be trained based on a risk assessment. This may mean that the majority or all staff will need to be trained

Note: A risk assessment tool has been included in this information pack to assist principals and can be downloaded from <http://www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/wellbeing/support/anaphyl.htm>

Training will be provided to these staff as soon as practicable after the student enrolls. Training will take place before the student's first day at school. Where this is not possible, an interim plan will be developed in consultation with the parents.

The school's first aid procedures and students emergency procedures plan (ASCIA Action Plan) will be followed in responding to an anaphylactic reaction.

Date
July 2008